AMERICA'S #1 SUPER HERO !

ECLIPSE

MIRACLEMAN

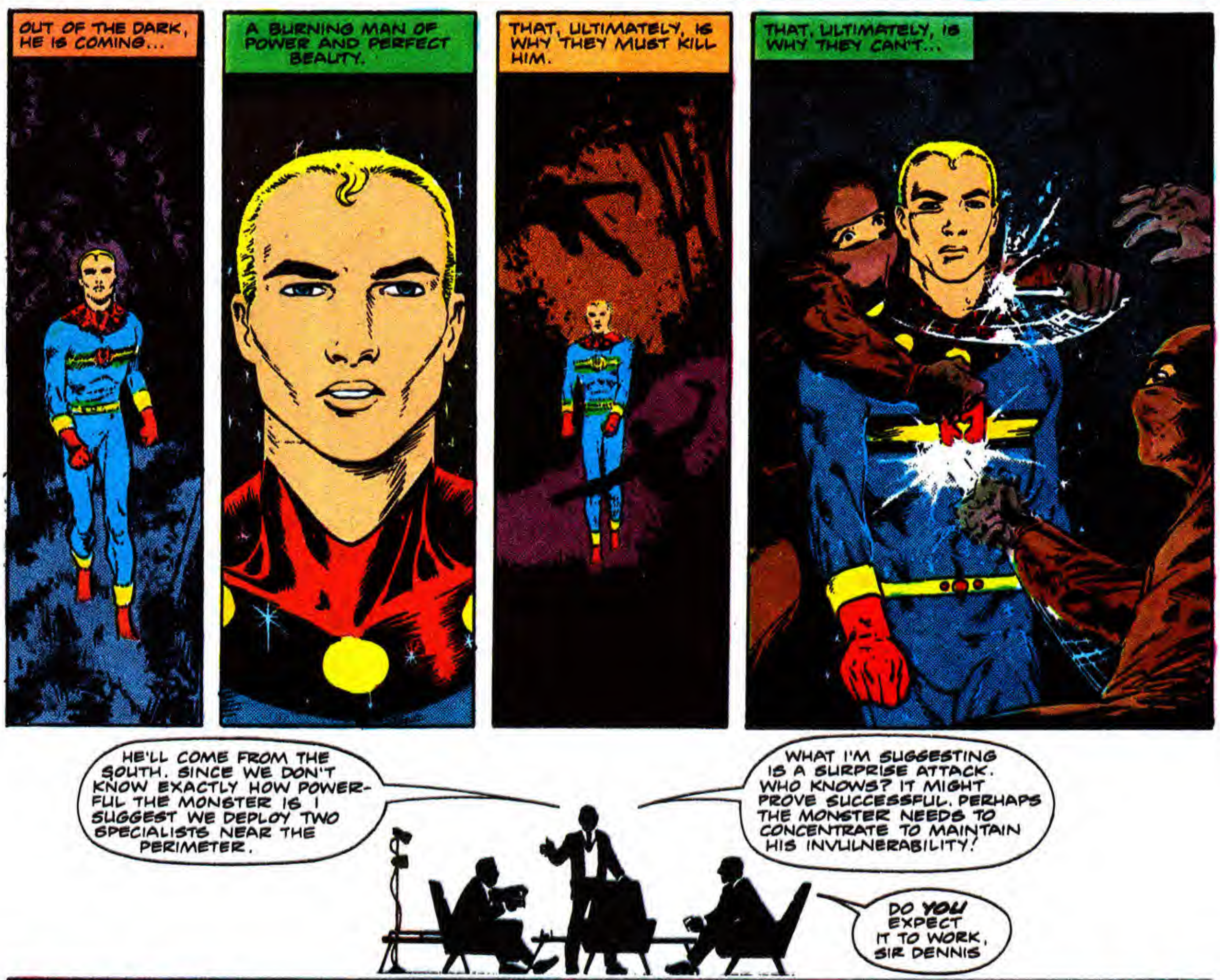
№3 75¢/ CAN. $1.00

™

by ALAN MOORE and ALAN DAVIS

MIRACLEMAN

OUT OF THE DARK


OUT OF THE DARK, HE IS COMING...
A BURNING MAN OF POWER AND PERFECT BEAUTY.
THAT, ULTIMATELY, IS WHY THEY MUST KILL HIM.
THAT, ULTIMATELY, IS WHY THEY CAN'T...
HE'LL COME FROM THE SOUTH. SINCE WE DON'T KNOW EXACTLY HOW POWERFUL THE MONSTER IS I SUGGEST WE DEPLOY TWO SPECIALISTS NEAR THE PERIMETER.
WHAT I'M SUGGESTING IS A SURPRISE ATTACK. WHO KNOWS? IT MIGHT PROVE SUCCESSFUL. PERHAPS THE MONSTER NEEDS TO CONCENTRATE TO MAINTAIN HIS INVULNERABILITY!
DO YOU EXPECT IT TO WORK, SIR DENNIS
"NO, GENTLEMEN. FRANKLY I DO NOT."

Writer: Alan Moore Artist: Alan Davis Colorist: Ron Courtney Editor: Dez Skinn

OUT OF THE DARK, HE IS SURFACING.

HIS STOMACH HURTS. HE IS STILL ALIVE. THERE IS A STRANGE BLUE CONSTELLATION IN A BLACK AND EMPTY SKY...

AH, MR. MORAN! YOU ARE AWAKE. I SHOULD IMAGINE THAT IS QUITE A RELIEF. HA HA.

MY NAME IS EVELYN CREAM. YOU MAY REMEMBER ME. I WAS THE BLACK GENTLEMAN WITH THE SAPPHIRE TEETH WHO SHOT YOU IN A LIFT RECENTLY.

TRANQUILISER BULLETS. THIS IS, OF COURSE, WHY YOUR TUMMY IS **SORE** RATHER THAN ENTIRELY **ABSENT.**

I WAS PAYED TO KILL YOU. YOU SEE, THAT BEING THE NATURE OF MY PROFESSION. AND YET... HA HA! WONDER OF WONDERS, HERE YOU ARE, STILL ALIVE!

WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW WHY?

FACT: YOU ARE CAPABLE OF BECOMING A SPLENDID CREATURE CALLED MIRACLEMAN AT THE MEREST UTTERANCE OF WHAT WE SHALL TERM A 'MAGIC WORD.' HENCE THE REGRETTABLE GAG.

FACT: YOU GAINED THIS CAPABILITY IN 1954. THIS WAS AS A RESULT OF AN EXPERIMENT TERMED **PROJECT ZARATHUSTRA**, CARRIED OUT BY A BRANCH OF AIRFORCE INTELLIGENCE KNOWN AS **THE SPOOKSHOW.**

FACT: IN 1963, THIS ORGANIZATION, FOR REASONS UNKNOWN, DECIDED TO TERMINATE THE EXPERIMENT BY DESTROYING YOU AND TWO SIMILARLY GIFTED COMPANIONS WITH AN A-BOMB.

THEY THOUGHT THEY HAD SUCCEEDED. THEY HAD NOT. IN 1982, YOU RESURFACED. AT THIS POINT, I WAS HIRED TO UNCOVER YOUR TRUE IDENTITY AND THEN KILL YOU.

FACT: YOU ARE TOTALLY ASTOUNDED BY THIS INFORMATION.

SIR DENNIS, AREN'T WE OVER-REACTING? ARE WE CERTAIN THAT CREAM HAS SOLD US OUT?

HE CLAIMED TO HAVE POSITIVELY IDENTIFIED THE SUBJECT: A MAN CALLED "PHILLIP WEBB." WE CHECKED IT OUT. "PHILLIP WEBB" DOESN'T EXIST.

CREAM WAS LYING TO US. HE'S NO IDIOT. HE MUST KNOW WHAT THE ZARATHUSTRA SECRET IS WORTH. NO, I THINK HE'S MADE A DEAL...

"I THINK HE'S MADE A DEAL WITH THE MONSTER."

THE STORY CANNOT POSSIBLY BE TRUE.

THE STORY MUST BE TRUE. THE COLD UNEARTHLY LIGHT OF CERTAINTY BEGINS TO GLIMMER IN HIS MIND. FROM THE SHADOWS OF DOUBT HE ADVANCES TOWARDS IT...

OUT OF THE DARK, HE IS COMING...

THE NIGHT COWERS AND CANNOT CONCEAL HIM...

THE NIGHT SCREAMS, AND CANNOT GAIN HIS ATTENTION...

THE NIGHT BURNS, AND ITS FIRES CANNOT CONTAIN HIM...

ASSUMING THE SURPRISE ATTACK FAILS, I NOMINATE A NUMBER OF SPECIALISTS WITH ROCKET LAUNCHERS AND THE LIKE AS OUR SECOND LINE OF DEFENCE...

OH, ***COME*** NOW, SIR DENNIS! ***ROCKET LAUNCHERS?*** OVER IN N.I. THE PADDIES USE THEM TO TAKE OUT OUR CHAPS' ***TANKS!*** SURELY AGAINST ONE MAN...

SEWARD, IN 1903 WE HIT THIS CREATURE WITH AN ATOMIC BOMB,..

"IT DIDN'T WORK."

"SEWARD, WE'VE GOT TO STOP HIM REACHING THAT BUNKER."

OUT OF THE DARK, HE IS EMERGING.

HE HAS A SUSPICION THAT HE HAS BEEN KEPT IN THE DARK FOR FAR TOO LONG...

YOU HAVE HEARD MY STORY, MR. MORAN. BE ASSURED THAT IT IS FOUNDED ON BOTH PERSONAL DEDUCTION AND UPON CERTAIN INFORMATION PROVIDED BY MY FORMER EMPLOYERS.

IT OCCURS TO ME THAT BOTH OF US HAVE EXCELLENT REASON TO INVESTIGATE THIS MATTER FURTHER.

YOU WISH TO KNOW THE TRUTH ABOUT YOUR ORIGINS. I WISH TO SHARE THAT KNOWLEDGE. I SUSPECT THAT IT MAY PROVE VALUABLE TO ME.

I BELIEVE THAT WE CAN BE OF ASSISTANCE TO EACH OTHER. IT IS THIS BELIEF THAT HAS PROMPTED ME TO RISK BETRAYING MY EMPLOYERS. IT NOW PROMPTS ME TO TAKE A ***GREATER*** RISK...

I'M GOING TO REMOVE YOUR GAG, MR. MORAN.

"KIMOTA."

SIR DENNIS... QUESTIONS ARE BOUND TO BE ASKED.. IF THE ZARATHUSTRA BUNKER REPRESENTS SUCH A SECURITY HAZARD, WHY WASN'T IT FOLDED EIGHTEEN YEARS AGO?

AND ALTHOUGH THE FRUITS OF MY LABOURS MIGHT ULTIMATELY PROVE THE ONLY MEANS WE HAVE OF STOPPING THIS CREATURE, I HOPE IT WILL NOT COME TO THAT...

I FEAR THE BLAME MUST REST WITH ME. I... DECIDED TO KEEP THE PROJECT PARTLY OPEN. I HOPED TO RECOUP SOME OF ZARATHUSTRA'S ENORMOUS BUDGET...

"ONE MONSTER IS MORE THAN ENOUGH."

REMARKABLE.

IN THE GATHERING TWILIGHT OF THE ROOM THERE STANDS AN INCANDESCENT MAN...

OUT OF THE DARK, HE IS COMING...

NO ENTRY GOVERNMENT PROPERTY

THERE ARE WALLS, AND HE DOES NOT CARE ABOUT THE WALLS.

THERE ARE MEN, AND THE MEN MEAN NOTHING TO HIM.

THERE ARE SNARES...

AND THE SNARES ARE NOT WORTHY OF HIS CONTEMPT.

OUR PENULTIMATE LINE OF DEFENCE WILL BE A BOMB. QUITE A ***LARGE*** BOMB, I WOULD IMAGINE...

OUR MEN WILL STILL BE IN THE AREA, SIR DENNIS...

THEY WILL BE AWARE OF THE BOMB. IT WILL GIVE THEM A GREATER INCENTIVE TO STOP HIM BEFORE HE REACHES IT. AND IF NEITHER THEY NOR THE BOMB ARE ABLE TO STOP HIM...

"...THEN IT IS BETTER THERE ARE NO WITNESSES FOR WHAT MUST FOLLOW."

HE APPROACHES THE BUNKER. THERE IS SOMETHING STANDING IN ITS SHADOWS...

OUT OF THE DARK, THE DARK OF LEGEND, INTO THE HARSH LAMPLIGHT OF MODERN REALITY...

AND HE IS STILL UNBELIEVABLE.

AND UNKNOWABLE.

AND UNNERVING.

VERY WELL, MR. CREAM. I THINK I'M PREPARED TO TRUST YOU FOR A LITTLE WHILE.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

THE... ER...THAT IS TO SAY...

THE BUNKER IN WHICH YOU WERE UNKNOWINGLY SUBJECTED TO THE EXPERIMENTS OF THE SPOOKSHOW IS FOR SOME REASON STILL STANDING. IT IS LOCATED IN THE COTSWOLD HILLS...

MR. MORAN...MY FORMER EMPLOYERS MAY HAVE LEARNED OF MY DUPLICITY BY NOW. THEY MAY HAVE HAD TIME TO ERECT DEFENCES. THERE COULD BE TROOPS, THERE COULD BE BOOBY TRAPS...

I SUPPOSE THERE COULD.

I DON'T CARE.

YOU'RE NOT TALKING TO MIKE MORAN NOW, YOU KNOW.

SIR DENNIS, I BELIEVE YOU'RE DELIBERATELY KEEPING OLIVER AND MYSELF IN THE DARK. WHAT ***ARE*** THESE DESPERATE MEASURES YOU KEEP MENTIONING?

SEWARD'S RIGHT. YOU HINTED THAT THEY WERE CONNECTED TO SOME FURTHER YIELD FROM THE ZARATHUSTRA FIASCO. IT'S ONLY PROPER THAT WE SHOULD BE TOLD.

OH, CERTAINLY IT'S PROPER, GENTLEMEN...

"IT JUST ISN'T ***SAFE.***"

THEY RIDE THE RAZOR EDGE OF THE WIND, THE MAN OF LIGHT CARRYING THE MAN OF SHADOWS THROUGH THE FREEZING SKY...

OUT OF THE DARK, HE IS COMING...

NOT SO FAST, YOU BOLSHEVIK BLIGHTER.

THERE STILL STANDS ONE WHO IS PREPARED TO DEFEND QUEEN AND COUNTRY AGAINST YOUR KREMLIN MASTERS AND THEIR LACKEYS.

IS THIS A JOKE OF SOME SORT?

NO, SIR, IT MOST ASSUREDLY IS NOT.

PREPARE YOURSELF FOR A ***TROUNCING***, MY SIZEABLE SOVIET FRIEND

SPARE US YOUR COYNESS, SIR DENNIS. YOU IMPLY THAT YOU HAVE SPENT THE YEARS SINCE '63 IN DUPLICATING THE ORIGINAL ZARATHUSTRA EXPERIMENT. THAT YOU HAVE PRODUCED ***ANOTHER*** MONSTER?

YES. YES I HAVE. BUT THE PROJECT'S ORIGINATOR DESTROYED MANY OF HIS NOTES BEFORE HE ABSCONDED. WE ONLY DIMLY UNDERSTOOD THE PROCESS. THERE WERE PROBLEMS...

OH, ***GOD***. NOT ***MORE*** BLOODY PROBLEMS. TELL ME, SIR DENNIS... DOES THIS FLAWED SUPERBEING OF YOURS HAVE A CUSTOMERILY ABSURD SOBRIQUET?

"YES, OLIVER, HE DOES..."

"WE CALL HIM ***BIG BEN.***"

MIRACLEMAN

"INSIDE STORY"

"MR. CREAM. IT IS YOU I AM ADDRESSING, SIR. IT IS YOU TO WHOM I REFER..."

"REALLY, OLD HORSE! THESE ANTICS SMACK OF THE DAUBED FACE AND THE OSTRICH PLUME. IT SEEMS ONE CANNOT TAKE THE JUNGLE OUT OF THE BOY AFTER ALL. WHAT DO YOU SAY, MR. CREAM?"

"EDUCATED AT RUGBY. TRAINED AT SANDHURST. YOU READ THE UNTRANSLATED NOVELS OF COLLETTE AND OWN AN ORIGINAL HOCKNEY. GOOD GOD, SIR, YOU ARE PRACTICALLY WHITE."

"WHAT ARE YOU DOING, SIR? WHAT ARE YOU DOING BACK IN THIS PLACE, CREEPING AMONGST THE NIGHT TREES AND SNIFFING AT THE ANCESTRAL SHADOWS?"

"YOU ARE A PROFESSIONAL, AN ARTIST IN THE WAYS OF MORTALITY. YOU KILLED THE BEAST-DADDY, LAUGHING AS YOU BLEW HIS BRAINS OVER HIS EPAULETTES. YOU ARE A MAN OF POWER."

"AND YET YOU FOLLOW THIS WHITE **LOA**, THIS MIRACLE-MAN WHO LEAVES A TRAIL OF DEAD AND FISHEYED FELLOWS IN HIS WAKE! CAN IT BE THAT YOU HAVE GONE NATIVE, MR. CREAM?"

"MR. CREAM, DO YOU AT LAST BELIEVE IN JUJU?"

"GREAT GRANDFATHER, PASS ME DOWN THE GRIS-GRIS AND THE POINTING BONE, FOR I HAVE AT THIS LATE STAGE OPTED TO BECOME ANOTHER CRAZY NIGGER."

"FROM THE TOP SECRET FILES OF ***BIG BEN***, THE MAN WITH NO TIME FOR CRIME..."

"IT LOOKED AS IF THIS PARTICULAR JOHNNY BOLSHEVIK WAS GOING TO BE A TOUGH NUT TO CRACK. I RECALLED THE CLIPPED AND MEASURED PHRASES OF ***SIR DENNIS ARCHER***..."

"'IT'S OUR FRIENDS IN THE KREMLIN, BEN. THEY WANT THE PLANS TO OUR NEW ZARATHUSTRA ***DEATH-RAY*** AND THEY'VE SENT A SUPER-COMMIE TO DO THEIR DIRTY WORK!'"

"'HIS NAME IS MAJOR MOLOTOV, AND ONLY YOU CAN STOP HIM.'"

"BUT COULD I? COULD I STOP THIS MARXIST MADMAN WHO HAD ALREADY SO BRUTALLY DISPATCHED A SCORE OF OUR FINEST TOMMIES?"

"HE HAD TO HAVE A WEAKNESS, AN ACHILLES' HEEL. I REMEMBERED WHEN I HAD FOUGHT ALONGSIDE ***DOC THUNDERBOLT*** AGAINST THE HORRIFYING BEING KNOWN ONLY AS ***MENACE!***"

"BUT WE DID, AND ***MENACE!*** WAS DESTROYED FOREVER... AS WERE ALL THE OTHER FIENDS WHO SPRANG UP TO TAKE HIS PLACE..."

"THE ***CRIMSON FINGER***, THE ***SPONGE***, DR. PANIC AND HIS ***PHANTOM ROBOT***, EVEN ***PHINEAS FISKE***, THE CREATURE WITH THE COBALT BRAIN..."

"I WAS BALLY WELL GOING TO HAVE A GO!"

"***MENACE!*** HAD KIDNAPPED DOC'S BEAUTIFUL ASSISTANT ***VALERIE***. IF WE HADN'T DISCOVERED THAT THE BRUTE WAS VULNERABLE TO ***COMMON TAP WATER*** HER DOOM WOULD HAVE BEEN ASSURED..."

"ONE BY ONE THEY CAME, ONE BY ONE THEY RECEIVED THEIR JUST DESSERTS AT THE DEPENDABLE HANDS OF ***THE MAN WITH NO TIME FOR CRIME***."

"THIS RED RACKETEER WOULD PROVE NO EXCEPTION. SOON I'D HIT UPON HIS WEAKNESS. (ELECTRICITY, PERHAPS? OR SOME UNKNOWN MINERAL?) SOON, SOON I'D UNCOVER HIS FATAL FLAW..."

"THEN HE'D BE IN TROUBLE."

"JUST... HOLD...THE LINE...FOR A SEC-OND LON-GER... DAMN. DAMN BLOODY DEATH AND HELL. NOW THE LEGS LOOK OUT OF PROPORTION. DAMN. THE DEADLINE'S TOMORROW. DAMN."

"PROCESS WHITE, PROCESS WHITE... AHH NO! I DIDN'T LEAVE THE... YES I DID. I LEFT THE TOP OFF AND IT'S GONE HARD. I BLOODY HATE IT WHEN IT GOES HARD."

"IT MUST BE MY BODY REACTING TO THE LUMP... SHUNTING ALL THE CHEMICALS AROUND AND MAKING ME FEEL ANXIOUS. JUST A NERVOUS THING. EVERY-THING'S OKAY. WHY IS THIS BRUSH ALL GUNGY?"

"MIKE, WHY THE HELL HAVEN'T YOU COME HOME YET?"

"WHERE ARE YOU? PERHAPS IF I PHONED THE PAPER... NO. YOU'D BE ANNOYED AND ANYWAY YOU'LL COME HOME SOON BECAUSE YOU ALWAYS DO EVENTUALLY..."

"I HOPE THE BABY'S ALRIGHT. I'M 30. AROUND 40 THEY SAY YOU RUN A GREATER RISK... MONGOLOID BABIES AND... NO. THEY RAN AN AMNIOCENTESIS. THEY SAID IT WAS NORMAL. NORMAL."

"IT HASN'T KICKED YET."

"GIVE IT A REST, LIZZIE. EVERYTHING'S FINE. BABY MORAN FINE. MUMMY MORAN FINE. DADDY MORAN FINE. MIRACLEMAN."

"THE PERSPECTIVE ON THAT CHAIR'S WRONG."

"IT'S MIRACLEMAN'S BABY IT'LL BE BORN WITH SUPER-POWERS... NO. IT'LL BE BORN WITH NO ARMS OR EYES AND JUST A HORRIBLE SCREAMING MOUTH THAT DRIBBLES BLOOD AND PUS AND..."

"I WISH I KNEW WHO HE WAS."

"I WISH HE'D STOP HITTING ME."

"I DON'T WANT TO HURT HIM. HE ISN'T AS POWERFUL AS I AM AND I THINK THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH HIS MIND."

"FLAWLESS CHINA BLUE EYES THAT NEVER BLINK, AND GLITTER LIKE MARBLES. HE'S A PSYCHOPATH."

"... AND HE'S A SUPERHUMAN. BUT WHERE DID HE COME FROM? FIRST A HIRED KILLER CHANGES SIDES AND TELLS ME OF A GOVERNMENT PLOT TO MURDER ME..."

"THEN HE LEADS ME TO A BUNKER UP HERE IN THE COTSWOLDS WHERE HE ASSURES ME I'LL FIND EVIDENCE CONCERNING MY TRUE ORIGINS AS MIRACLEMAN. HE TELLS ME TO GO ON AHEAD..."

"SOME SOLDIERS TRY TO CUT MY THROAT. SOME MORE SOLDIERS FIRE ROCKETS AND FLAME-THROWERS AT ME. A BOMB IS EXPLODED UNDERNEATH MY FEET."

"FINALLY I'M ATTACKED BY A SUPERHUMAN LUNATIC IN A BOWLER HAT WHO THINKS I'M A COMMUNIST."

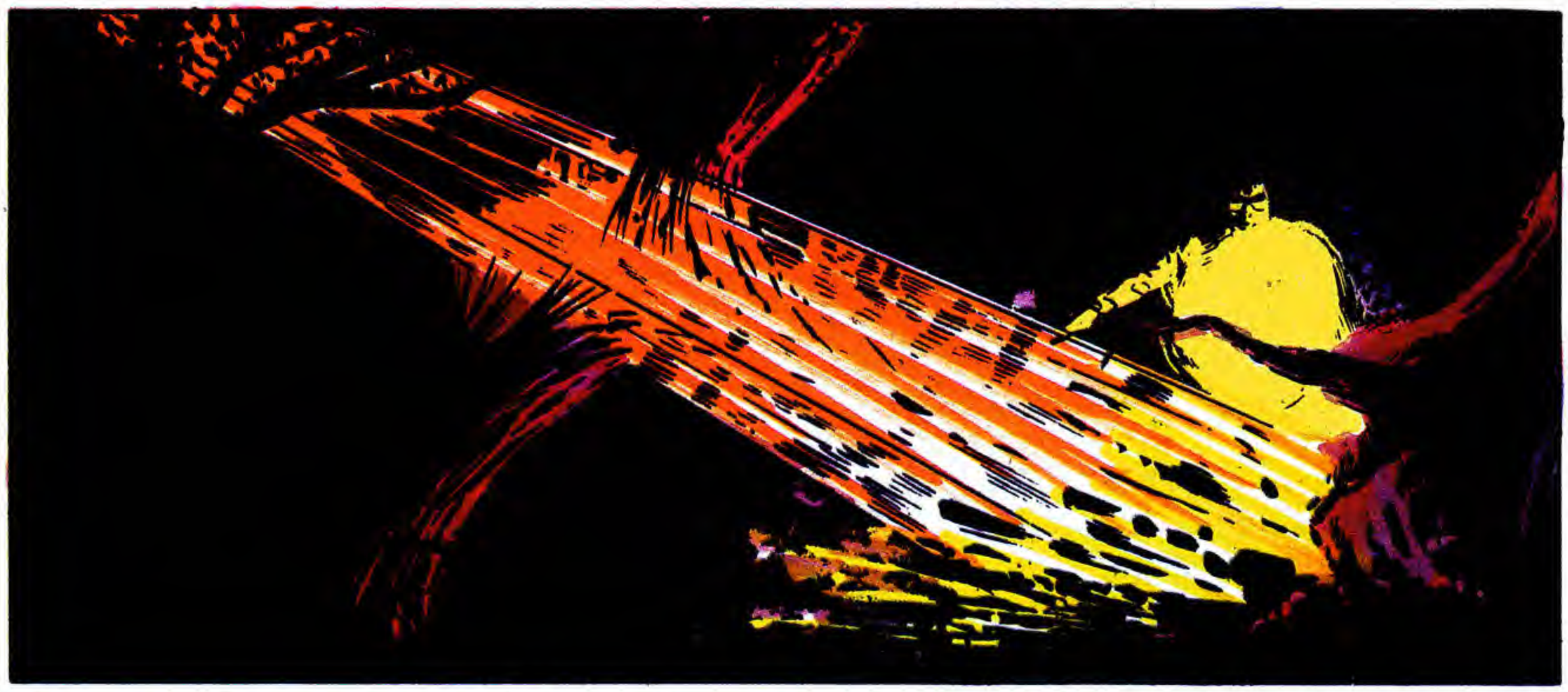
"I COULD GET TIRED OF THIS."

SURRENDER, BUTCHER OF LENINGRAD!! SURRENDER OR FIGHT LIKE A MAN, DAMN YOUR EYES!

"ALL RIGHT."

"ALL RIGHT."

CCHAIKA
SHAITCHEECHHH
KKRAAAITTCCHH
CHITTRAIII



"WHITE MAN'S MAGIC..."

MR. MORAN...

MR. MORAN...

MIRACLEMAN.

UH... MIRACLEMAN. BUT OF COURSE. MIRACLEMAN, WE HAVE LITTLE TIME...

THERE WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY BE BACK-UP TROOPS IN THE AREA.

IF YOU WILL ALLOW ME TO BLAST OPEN THE BUNKER DOOR...

MR. MOR... MIRACLEMAN! WAIT! THERE MAY BE TRAPS...

THERE MAY BE...

THERE COULD BE...

GREAT GOD.

"WE ARRIVED ON THE SITE OF THE ZARATHUSTRA BUNKER AT 3·40 A.M. THIS WAS ON THE MORNING OF JULY 9TH, 1982."

"THE CARNAGE WAS HORRIFYING. MOST OF OUR SPECIALISTS WERE DEAD, INJURED OR IN DEEP SHOCK. IN LIGHT OF THIS, ORDERING FURTHER TROOPS INTO THE AREA SEEMED POINTLESS."

"YOU MUST UNDERSTAND THAT IN SUCH EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES THE SITUATION IS NOT IMMEDIATELY CLEAR AND DISCRETION IS THE BEST COURSE. HENCE MY OWN ACTIONS."

"INDEED, IT WAS NOT UNTIL LATER THAT WE WERE ABLE TO RECONSTRUCT WHAT HAD HAPPENED WITHIN THE BUNKER FROM THE SURVIVING EVIDENCE. MY REPORT FOLLOWS."

"I HOPE THAT YOU WILL READ IT CAREFULLY AND WITHOUT PREJUDICE BEFORE DECIDING WHETHER TO ACCEPT MY PROFFERED RESIGNATION. I REMAIN, YOURS FAITHFULLY,"

"SIR DENNIS ARCHER."

"COMPARING THE TIME OF OUR ARRIVAL WITH THAT OF LATER EVENTS, WE'VE DEDUCED THAT THE EXPERIMENTAL SUPERHUMAN "BIG BEN" REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS AT APPROXIMATELY 3·35."

"AS TO HIS STATE OF MIND AT THIS POINT, I'M AFRAID WE CAN ONLY GUESS."

"DUE TO HIS PARA-REALITY PROGRAMMING, BIG BEN BELIEVED THE MONSTER TO BE A SOVIET SPY NAMED 'MAJOR MOLOTOV,' A DECEPTION NECESSARY IN ORDER TO MOTIVATE HIM."

"AT AROUND 3·35, WE BELIEVE HE AWOKE, AND DESPITE HIS INJURIES, MADE HIS WAY BACK TO THE BUNKER INTENT UPON FINISHING THE FIGHT THAT HE HAD STARTED."

"FURTHERMORE, HE BELIEVED THE BUNKER TO CONTAIN A PROTOTYPE 'DEATH RAY' WHICH HE HAD BEEN TOLD 'MAJOR MOLOTOV' WAS INTENT UPON STEALING."

"AS FOR THE MONSTER AND EVELYN CREAM, DIGITAL RECORDERS IN THE BUNKER SHOW THAT IT WAS BREACHED AT EXACTLY 2·39. ONCE INSIDE, WE ASSUME THEY SPENT THE NEXT HALF HOUR SIMPLY LOOKING."

"THEY WOULD HAVE ALMOST CERTAINLY NOTICED THE SKELETON(S) OF THE DEAD SUPERHUMAN."

"LIKEWISE THE SKELETON(S) OF THE VISITOR AND THE MOUNTED HULL FRAGMENT OF THE VISITOR'S CRAFT. IN THEMSELVES, HOWEVER, THESE EXHIBITS WOULD MEAN LITTLE TO THE UNINFORMED."

"IN THEMSELVES, THEY WOULD NOT HAVE PROVOKED A REACTION FEROCIOUS ENOUGH TO DEVASTATE MILLIONS OF POUNDS WORTH OF TECHNOLOGY."

"IT IS CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT ***SOMETHING*** DID."

"WE CAN ONLY ASSUME THAT IT WAS THE VIDEO TAPES AND THE DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE CONTAINED THEREIN THAT TRIGGERED THE MONSTER'S APOCALYPTIC OUTBURST."

"AGAIN, ON-SITE DIGITAL RECORDERS INFORM US THAT THE VIDEO MONITORS WERE USED AND THAT SEVERAL KEY SEQUENCES OF A CLASSIFIED NATURE WERE VIEWED IN THEIR ENTIRETY."

"BUT AS TO WHICH PIECE OF INFORMATION SHOULD AFFECT THE MONSTER SO SEVERELY WE CANNOT SAY WITH ANY PRECISION. REMEMBER, WE ARE DEALING WITH A MIND THAT IS NOT HUMAN."

"ALL WE CAN SAY IS THAT THE MASTER VIDEO DISPLAY WAS ACTIVATED AT 3:10, THAT CREAM AND THE MONSTER SPENT THE NEXT THREE QUARTERS OF AN HOUR STUDYING IT..."

"...AND THAT AT 3:56 A.M., THE CREATURE KNOWN AS MIRACLEMAN WENT SUDDENLY AND INEXPLICABLY BERSERK."

MIRACLEMAN

'ZARATHUSTRA'

"THE FIRST SECTION OF TAPE TO BE VIEWED, ACCORDING TO OUR RECONSTRUCTION, COMMENCED AT 3.10 A.M. AND CONCERNED THE ZARATHUSTRA PROCESS ITSELF..."

...AND SO, IN SUMMARY, THE MAJOR POINTS OF THE PROCESS ARE AS FOLLOWS...

FIRSTLY, WITH WHAT KNOWLEDGE WE HAVE GLEANED FROM OUR STUDY OF THE VISITOR AND ITS CRAFT, WE BELIEVE IT POSSIBLE TO REPLICATE A HUMAN BEING FROM A SINGLE CELL.

THE AMERICANS AND THE CHINESE ARE CURRENTLY BELIEVED TO BE WORKING ON SOMETHING SIMILAR, BUT OUR PROCESS DIFFERS IN THAT THE REPLICATE HAS AN ALTERED D.N.A. STRUCTURE.

BOTH ITS BRAIN AND BODY ARE ALMOST PERFECTLY EVOLVED, LENDING IT A WIDE RANGE OF EXTRA-HUMAN ABILITIES. IT DOES NOT HOWEVER, POSSESS ITS OWN INDEPENDENT CONSCIOUSNESS.

THE NEXT STAGE IS THE IMPLANTING OF TWO IDENTICAL INFRA-SPATIAL TRIGGER DEVICES INTO THE BRAIN OF THE EVOLVED REPLICATE AND THE BRAIN OF ITS CELL-DONOR.

HERE WE SEE THE OPERATIONS BEING PERFORMED SIMULTANEOUSLY UPON THE BRAIN OF OUR SECOND SUBJECT AND THAT OF HIS CELLULAR REPLICATE, DESIGNATED "YOUNG MIRACLEMAN"

I REMIND YOU THAT THIS STAGGERING TECHNOLOGY IS PURELY THAT WHICH WE HAVE EXTRAPOLATED FROM THE REMAINS OF OUR UNFORTUNATE VISITOR.

THE NEXT STAGE IS THE DISPLACEMENT OF THE REPLICATE INTO INFRA-SPACE, WHERE IT REMAINS CONNECTED TO ITS HUMAN COUNTERPART BY THE AGENCY OF THE IMPLANTED TRIGGER DEVICE.

WHEN THE TRIGGER DEVICE IS ACTIVATED, THE HUMAN BODY IS DISPLACED INTO INFRA-SPACE WHILE THE REPLICATE BODY MOVES INTO OUR OWN CONTINUUM.

IT IS AT THIS POINT THAT THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE HUMAN FORM IS TRANSFERRED TO THAT OF THE REPLICATE. THE TRIGGER DEVICE IS ACTIVATED BY THE SPEAKING OF A POST-HYPNOTIC KEY WORD.

IN THE CASE OF THIS PARTICULAR SUBJECT, THE KEY WORD IS THE NAME OF HIS SENIOR PROTEGE "MIRACLEMAN"

OH, GOD...

"AT 3:22, THE VIDEO TAPE WAS WOUND FORWARD TO A SECTION DEALING, AMONGST OTHER THINGS, WITH THE TACTICAL APPLICATION OF PROJECT ZARATHUSTRA..."

...NECESSITY IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT WHILE AMERICA CURRENTLY POSSESSES THE ATOMIC BOMB AND RUSSIA AND CHINA WILL SHORTLY BE SIMILARLY ENDOWED, BRITAIN AS YET HAS NO SUCH CAPABILITY.

IT IS OUR BELIEF THAT THE TACTICAL POTENTIAL OF PROJECT ZARATHUSTRA WILL MAKE ALL CONVENTIONAL WEAPONRY, INCLUDING THE A-BOMB, AS OBSOLETE AS THE SLINGSHOT.

BY WAY OF ILLUSTRATION, HERE WE SEE THE YOUNGEST SUBJECT, DESIGNATED "KID MIRACLEMAN", IN A FIELD TEST DURING WHICH HE OUTRACED THE FASTEST CONTEMPORARY JET AEROPLANE.

...AND HERE WE SEE HIM PENETRATING A BUNKER OF SOLID TITANIUM AS IF IT DID NOT EXIST. IMAGINE THE MEGA-DEATH POTENTIAL OF SUCH A CREATURE IN AN INTER-NATIONAL CONFLICT.

NATURALLY, IN CHOOSING SUBJECTS FOR THE ZARATHUSTRA EXPERIMENT WE HAVE NOT BEEN OBLIVIOUS TO THE POSSIBILITY OF PUBLIC RESISTANCE TO THE CONCEPT AND HAVE COVERED OUR TRACKS ACCORDINGLY...

THE THREE SUBJECTS TO DATE HAVE BEEN YOUNG MALES, THE CHILDREN OF DECEASED AIR FORCE PERSONNEL, AND HAVE NO OTHER SURVIVING RELATIVES.

THEY WERE CHOSEN SIMPLY BECAUSE THEIR NAMES WERE AVAILABLE FROM ROYAL AIR FORCE FILES, TO WHICH AIRFORCE INTELLIGENCE HAS FULL ACCESS.

MORAN'S FATHER...

MORAN'S FATHER WAS IN THE R.A.F.. HE DIED DURING THE WAR. AND DICKY... I REMEMBER THAT HIS FATHER HAD BEEN AN AIRFORCE MAJOR. OH, GOD. WHY DIDN'T WE ***REALISE?***

WHY DIDN'T WE REALISE WHAT THEY WERE DOING TO OUR LIVES?

"AT 3·43, THEY PRESUMABLY OVERWOUND THE TAPE, AND THE NEXT SECTION WAS VIEWED OUT OF SEQUENCE, CHRONICLING AS IT DOES THE EVENTS OF 1968, RATHER THAN THOSE OF 1954-55..."

... AND DESPITE THE FACT THAT WHEN THE PROJECT'S ORIGINATOR VANISHED FIVE YEARS AGO HE TOOK MANY OF HIS FINDINGS WITH HIM, IT WAS DECIDED TO PROCEED WITH THE PROJECT.

ZARATHUSTRA MK. II HAS NOT BEEN AN UNQUALIFIED SUCCESS, OWING TO THE GAPS IN OUR TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE. THE RESULT IS THE FLAWED SUPERHUMAN DESIGNATED "BIG BEN".

THE ACHIEVABLE POWER-LEVELS OF THE BIG BEN MODEL ARE MARKEDLY INFERIOR TO THOSE OF HIS PREDECESSORS OF FIFTEEN YEARS BEFORE.

WHILE HE CAN FLY, IS INHUMANLY STRONG AND HIGHLY RESISTANT TO DAMAGE, HE IS POSSESSED OF NOWHERE NEAR THE SAME ABILITIES AS THE 'MIRACLEMAN' TRIO. THIS, HOWEVER, IS NOT HIS GREATEST FAULT...

DUE TO OUR LIMITED UNDERSTANDING OF THE PARA-REALITY PROGRAMMING NECESSARY IN ORDER TO CONTROL THESE REMARKABLE CREATURES, 'BIG BEN' RECEIVED INADEQUATE CONDITIONING.

AS A RESULT, HIS MIND BECAME UNBALANCED. ALTHOUGH THIS CONDITION MAKES HIM IDEALLY SUGGESTIBLE FOR OUR PURPOSES, IT LIMITS HIS EFFECTIVENESS AGAINST A RATIONAL OPPONENT.

THAT EXPLAINS WHO THAT MANIAC OUTSIDE WAS...

...BUT WHAT IN GOD'S NAME IS A PARA-REALITY PROGRAMMING PROCESS? OR AN INFRA-SPATIAL BRAIN IMPLANT FOR THAT MATTER? OR A CELLULAR REPLICATE?

THE IDEA OF A CELLULAR REPLICATE SOUNDS VERY SIMILAR TO THE CURRENTLY FASHIONABLE CLONING PROCESS.

CREAM, THIS HAPPENED IN THE EARLY 1950'S ACCORDING TO THAT LAST TAPE. IN THE EARLY '50'S WE HADN'T EVEN DEVELOPED POLIO VACCINE.

WIND IT BACK AND LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT WHAT WE MISSED...

"ACCORDING TO OUR ESTIMATE THIS WAS AT ROUGHLY 3·46 A.M. FROM WHAT WE CAN GATHER, BIG BEN ARRIVED IN THE BUNKER UNNOTICED AT APPROXIMATELY 3·42 A.M."

"IT IS OUR OPINION THAT HE SAW THE PRECEEDING VIDEO SEQUENCE IN ITS ENTIRETY. IT CONTAINED MUCH INFORMATION PREVIOUSLY UNKNOWN TO HIM, HENCE HIS CURRENT CONDITION."

"ALTHOUGH, AS I HAVE SAID, WE CANNOT BE ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN WHICH PIECE OF INFORMATION PREFACED THE MONSTER'S ERUPTION, THE SEQUENCE EMBARKED UPON AT 3·48 SEEMS A STRONG CONTENDER..."

"THE SEQUENCE IN QUESTION DESCRIBES THE PARA-REALITY PROGRAMMING PROCESS."

...ORDER TO FULLY CONTROL THE THOUGHT PROCESSES AND MOTIVATIONS OF THESE POTENTIALLY CATASTROPHIC CREATURES, AN ENTIRELY ARTIFICIAL REALITY SET IS CONSTRUCTED.

THE REALITY SET IS THEN FED DIRECTLY INTO THEIR UNCONSCIOUS MINDS WHILE THEY LAY UNDER THE EFFECTS OF POWERFUL SEDATIVES. BRIEFLY, THE PROCESS IS AS FOLLOWS:

THE DREAM WORLD WHICH WE HAVE CONSTRUCTED IS ONE IN WHICH A PSEUDO-RATIONAL EXPLANATION EXISTS FOR THESE BEINGS AND THEIR ABHUMAN ABILITIES.

IT IS A JUVENILE BUT EFFECTIVE SCENARIO IN WHICH THE CREATURES BELIEVE THAT THEY HAVE BEEN MADE INTO 'SUPER-HEROES' BY A SEMI-MYSTICAL BEING NAMED 'GUNTAG BORGHELM'.

AS THEY LAY UPON THE SOMATIC-INDUCER COUCHES, THESE FANTASIES ARE PUMPED INTO THEIR SLEEPING CONSCIOUSNESS BY OUR VISITOR-DERIVED TECHNOLOGY.

WE ARE THUS ABLE TO FULLY TEST THEIR RESPONSES AND REACTIONS WITH A TOTALLY SAFE HALLUCINATORY 'DRY RUN', RATHER LIKE A FLIGHT SIMULATOR.

SOME OF THE FANTASIES WE PROJECT CONTAIN DELIBERATE CONTRADICTIONS, SOME CONTAIN EVENTS TO STRETCH THE SUBJECTS CREDIBILITIES TO THE FULLEST.

WE ARE ATTEMPTING TO DETERMINE HOW OUR ARTIFICIAL BELIEF-SYSTEM WILL ENDURE UNDER STRESS.

MILE

WITH CREATURES OF THIS CAPABILITY, WE CAN AFFORD NO ERROR. THUS, OUR PROGRAMMING HAS BEEN LENGTHY AND EXHAUSTIVE. THE DATE OF THIS RECORDING IS JANUARY, 1962...

...AND THE CREATURES HAVE LAIN DREAMING FOR THE LAST EIGHT YEARS, THEIR ENTIRE EXISTENCE A COMPUTER-DESIGNED FANTASY.

IN ORDER TO EXPLAIN THE FINER DETAILS OF THIS ALL-IMPORTANT MIND PROGRAMMING, HERE IS THE CONTROLLER AND ORIGINATOR OF THE ZARATHUSTRA PROJECT...

...DR. EMIL GARGUNZA.

GREETINGS.

AS YOU HAVE SEEN, BY EMPLOYING THE TECHNOLOGY GLEANED FROM THE VISITOR AND HIS CRAFT WE HAVE COMPLETELY PROGRAMMED THE MINDS OF THESE NEAR-DIVINE CREATURES...

...PROVIDING THEM IN THE PROCESS WITH AN UTTERLY MANUFACTURED IDENTITY WHICH IS OURS TO MANIPULATE AT WILL. TO WHIT: THE IDENTITY OF A CHILDREN'S COMIC-BOOK CHARACTER.

GAAARRR-GUNZAAAAAA!

"IT WAS AT 5·56 THAT THE VIDEO MACHINE MALFUNCTIONED AND JAMMED."

"IT WAS AT 5·56 THAT THE MONSTER WENT BERSERK."

...COMIC BOOK CHARACTER...

"THE DAMAGE WAS EXTENSIVE."

"WE CAN ONLY ASSUME THAT AFTER THE MONSTER'S INITIAL RAGE HAD ABATED, CREAM SOMEHOW MANAGED TO CALM HIM DOWN."

"FOR THAT, AT LEAST, WE CAN BE GRATEFUL TO HIM."

...COMIC BOOK CHARACTER...

"WHATEVER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, CREAM AND THE SUPERHUMAN VACATED THE BUNKER AT 4·10 A.M."

"IT ONLY REMAINED FOR MYSELF AND THE CLEAN-UP CREW TO MOVE IN..."

...COMIC BOOK CHARACTER...

"...AND PICK UP THE PIECES."

"REPORT ENDS."

EPILOGUE:

"FROM THE TOP SECRET FILES OF BIG BEN, THE MAN WITH NO TIME FOR CRIME..."

"FOR A MOMENT, MAJOR MOLOTOV HAD ALMOST HAD ME FOOLED WITH HIS DEVILISH RED PROPAGANDA. LUCKILY, **JACK KETCH** AND **OWLWOMAN**, MY COLLEAGUES FROM THE **BULLDOG BRIGADE**, ARRIVED JUST IN TIME..."

OKAY, FIONA... THERE HE IS. APPROACH HIM CAREFULLY.

REMEMBER, HE'S DANGEROUS...

"JACK KETCH SMILED GRIMLY AS HE TOLD ME HOW THE RED ROGUE HAD USED A **BRAIN BEAM** TO MAKE ME DOUBT MY OWN IDENTITY. A FIENDISH TRICK THAT OH SO NEARLY WORKED."

"LUCKILY, OWLWOMAN HAD BROUGHT AN ULTRA-VEST FROM HER MOUNTAIN FORTRESS WHICH WOULD DRAIN OFF THE HARMFUL MIND-CLOUDING RADIATION. IT WAS GOOD TO HAVE SUCH STAUNCH ALLIES."

THERE'S A DOUBLE LOCK ON THE CLASP. MAKE SURE IT'S PROPERLY FASTENED. WE DON'T WANT THIS BLOODY LUNATIC BURSTING LOOSE HALFWAY DOWN THE M-WAY...

"AS THEY HELPED ME FROM THE BUNKER TOWARDS THE WAITING **OWLCAR**, THEY TOLD ME THAT THANKS TO MY DELAYING TACTICS THEY HAD BEEN ABLE TO PREVENT MOLOTOV ESCAPING WITH THE DEATH RAY."

"I SMILED. IT WAS COMFORTING TO KNOW THAT THE SOVIET SUPER-VILLAIN, DESPITE HIS POWERS, OWED HIS DEFEAT TO **THE MAN WITH NO TIME FOR CRIME!**"

OKAY. EASY DOES IT. EASY...

COME ON LET'S GET HIM FASTENED IN AND THEN LET'S TAKE THE POOR BASTARD HOME.

4:38: IN THE SODIUM LIT HOUR BEFORE DAWN THE GREAT TRUCKS ROLL SOUTH. SOME CARRY BREAKFAST CEREAL AND SOME CARRY BALLBEARINGS. SOME ARE **EMPTY**...

...AND SOME ARE **NOT.**

END.